



PASTOR'S CORNER

What would Jesus Do?

Recently a friend, who was facing a difficult decision, asked the question, what would Jesus do? This can be a good way to approach a problem, but we must know it is not a way to receive a fixed answer for a hard decision. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, admonished the believers to follow the example of Christ, but then added, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. (Phil. 2:12) I interpret fear and trembling to be that our understanding of God and right and wrong are not infallible, not that we should be afraid. Our opinions should always be tempered with soul searching prayer for understanding.

When we think of the question, what would Jesus do, we must remember that Jesus began at a very different place from where we do. The most significant difference between me and Jesus is, after Jesus began his ministry of preaching and healing the sick, the only earthly possessions He had were the clothes he was wearing. Jesus did not work for a living, but depended on the good will of the people to give him food and a place to sleep while He devoted his time to what He called, doing the will of My Father. Jesus' passion was His ministry and not earthly goods, but He was grateful for the goods others shared with Him. We are not as divested from earthly possessions as Jesus was and we cannot expect that everyone should be, rather we must hope for the faith community to produce one like Jesus, maybe only once in a generation. We must then listen to these passionate messengers even as we listen to Jesus.

We face difficult decisions all the time. We may wish for a fixed answers, but there are none. Finding the answer is part of the maturing process of our faith. As we mature in faith, we are not more sure of our understanding of God and His will, but rather, are less sure. Scott Peck writes that people of a mature faith have more doubt in their minds than those with a less mature faith. As we mature in faith, we acknowledge the mystery of God. We are less sure about our own opinions and have more respect for the opinions of others. A mature faith is not one that claims to have absolute understanding of truth, but is one that seeks to know truth.

So, my friends, if you ask, what would Jesus do, I commend you. Remember, however, that this does not give you a fixed answer. But, if you seek God with all your heart in humility, you have the promise that you will find what you are searching for.

I hope you enjoyed the flowers of spring as much as I did. I wish for you a blessed summer and that, when the heat comes, you will still give thanks for all things. God be with you until next time.

Moses Mast

The Little Hammock Cheryl Crichley

My son, Jeffrey, and I had the opportunity to visit the country of El Salvador with an Alternative

Spring Break group from Austin College in Sherman, Texas. Other members of our group included college students, professors, journalists, chaplains, ministers, psychologists, and musicians. This trip was important to me for a number of reasons. Central America is my research area as a student of cultural anthropology, and as an activist, I have followed events there for several years. My 16-year-old son has acquired an interest in the area, especially the revolutionary movements and characters. Also, our pastors, Moses and Sadie Mast, lived with El Salvadoran refugees for several years in a camp in Honduras.

The original purpose of the trip was to study such things as the history of the country, the war, the martyrs of the church, and the current community-based and Christian-based organizations. The earthquakes of January 13th and February 13th added another dimension, and we visited several severely damaged sites and a refugee camp, and heard the stories of numerous victims. (El Salvador is sometimes called "The Little Hammock" because the ground can swing back and forth in the frequent earthquakes.) I am aware that Mennonite Central Committee is one of the organizations working to help those affected. Medicines, blankets, and other items were taken by our group to give to those in need. Besides these small donations, we were able to stand in solidarity with a number of people and hear their stories. In return, this trip gave us the chance to make new friends, to experience a new environment, and to learn. In addition, it has forced me to take another look at my own life, my values, goals, and possessions. Several of us have given or plan to give presentations to various groups about what we learned while there. There is the feeling that these earthquakes have been an "x-ray" of society in El Salvador, revealing some real problems below a surface of progress and modernization.

How do I now respond as an advocate, as a Mennonite, and as a student of human history, behavior, and relationships? One way is to continue to tell the stories of the people who want the world to know what they have suffered. They would greatly appreciate your thoughts and prayers, and so would I.

April Revisited

This has been a month of reflection and promise. Palm Sunday services were held at Hopefield Ranch. The early morning gathering celebrated the entry into Jerusalem of Christ and contemplated the crowds reasons for rejoicing. We had a wonderful meal provided by the Ranch and then re-gathered for services. Easter at Joy Mennonite was just as special. A few of us gathered early at the church for sunrise and sang and worshiped on the east porch of the building. What a pleasure to be together and enjoy the new day. After an excellent breakfast by Moses Mast and Terry Hostetler (bet you didn't know these

guys can REALLY cook), a larger group met for worship and praise.

Bill and Thea Klassen continue their trip over-seas. We look forward to their return this coming month and are sure to hear some good stories of their travels.

Peter and Kay Brueckner have recently returned from a family funeral in Tennessee. Please keep them in your prayers during this time of sorrow.

Cheryl Crichley gave a summary of her trip to El Salvador. Some of the pictures and facts she presented were truly startling. Read more of her thoughts and observations in her article this month.

Joy Mennonite is helping Debra Ray renovate a house she had moved to her property. In the midst of this construction effort, Debra has been diagnosed with cancer and has subsequently lost her job. Please pray for this friend of Joy.

COMING EVENTS

- May 15th there will be a prayer vigil at St. Pauls cathedral at NW 7th and Robinson from 5:30 pm- 8:30 pm. This is also a gathering on significant topics of non-violence, justice, peace, and collaboration.
- May 16th is the Federal execution of Timothy McVeigh. For those of you wishing to attend, there will be a prayer vigil at the Jesus Wept statue, at the corner of NW 5th and Harvey, that morning from 4am-7am. While this is a subject of great controversy and debate, the death penalty and it's ramifications are of importance to many of our readers. Please keep us in your prayers as we seek understanding and truth in these matters.
- May 20th is our next date for business meeting. We plan on a picnic/pot-luck at Will Rogers Park that afternoon and hope to see you there.

**FINAL
THOUGHTS**
Deborah O'Neal

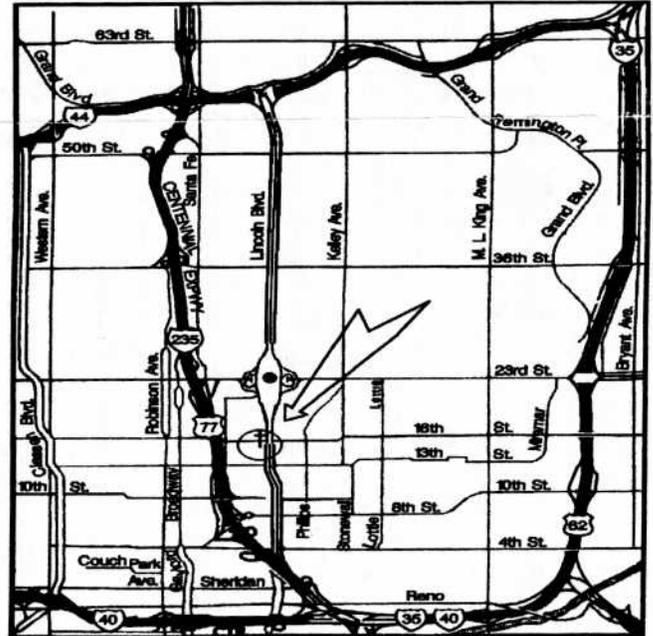
have a lawn care business), animals(two dogs, seven cats), and am not able to work on my own without direct supervision. If I

I took an aptitude test the other day that I found on the Internet.

According to the results I'm NOT suitable to work with children(I have two), the public(my husband and I

thought any of that was really true, I think I'd wind up in a corner crying.

As a matter of fact, I think I must be very well suited to be a mom or God wouldn't have gifted me with my kids. I must get along well with the public, otherwise our business would have failed. As for the animals, well, let's just say they're really spoiled and leave it at that. Lastly, I have the best supervisor in the universe, God. He gives me things to do and it's up to me to ask for help or not. He doesn't force me to do or think or say anything, it's MY decision. Am I right? Sometimes. Am I discouraged? Sometimes. But He put me here for a reason and I must have an aptitude for HIM.



JOY MENNONITE CHURCH
504 NE 16TH OKC OK 73104
Sunday Services 10:00am Sunday School 11:30 am
All are welcome, please join us as you are able

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